

Evening Public Ledger

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MOORE'S COALITION CABINET
MAYOR-TO-BE MOORE'S appointment of John C. Winston as Director of Public Works confirms the impression that he has striven to form what might be termed a coalition cabinet.

Mr. Winston, as the chairman of the committee of seventy and a conspicuous figure in local reform movements for fourteen years, represents the element which has heretofore refused to mix with the so-called "practical" factions, meaning those "what-are-we-here-for?" politicians to whom the getting of offices is one of the primary functions of government.

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requires an iron nerve to extract Christmas contributions out of men and women who struggle along through these expensive days on \$1200 salaries. Solicitor Siegert appears to have the nerve. We shall see whether Mr. Hazlett is similarly endowed.

For his boss Solicitor Siegert wanted to get a \$500 present. Now it is to be a bouquet. Hazlett is the recorder of deeds. He isn't an opera singer and he isn't making a stage debut or getting married or dead. He doesn't need flowers. The workers in his office need their money and they have a right to it.

PALMER'S "TRIUMPH" OVER THE PACKERS

Whether it is More than an Empty Victory Will Appear if the Price of Meat and Groceries Comes Down

WHETHER the enthusiastic delight of Attorney General Palmer over the settlement of the suits against the five big packing companies is justified will not appear for a year or two.

The packers, while insisting that they have violated no law, have consented to confine their activity as corporations to the slaughtering of sheep and beef cattle and to the handling of eggs, poultry and cheese and the byproducts made from the parts of the meat carcasses not suitable for food. They will dispose of their interests in the stockyards, in the railroads, in the retail meat business and in the handling of cereals and other substitutes for meat.

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Mr. Palmer, as a result of the compromise, says that "the price of meat is within the control of the people themselves." It does not appear exactly what he means by this or how the people will have greater control over the price of meat than they always have had.

Assuming that the men interested in the packing industry do not retain a financial interest in the stockyards and that those yards are controlled and managed by men more interested in getting a good price for livestock for the benefit of the stockraisers than in forcing down the price in the interest of the packers, the chief beneficiaries will be the stockraisers and not the consuming public.

The stockraisers have complained for years that they were at the mercy of the packers and that they had to sell their stock at less than a fair market price. Now, if the freeing of the stockyards from the control of the packers is to satisfy the stockraisers, they will get better prices than in the past and the packers who have to pay that price will hand it on to the consuming public. It is difficult to understand how if meat on the hoof is to cost more meat in the retail store is to cost less.

Perhaps Mr. Palmer can tell us.

The packers, who have in the past successfully defended the legality of their business and who still insist that they have violated no law, admit that they have agreed to the compromise in response to public opinion. They are business men and not sentimentalists. Some other business men may be cynical enough to assume that there are sound commercial reasons back of the compromise and that the packers know just what they are doing and why they are doing it. If they have not handed Mr. Palmer a large and bitter lemon, many hard-headed observers will miss their guess.

The defense of the packers is well known. They have proclaimed far and wide in the advertising columns of the newspapers that their net profits on the meat they handled was one-half of 1 per cent. They have even gone so far as to say that they sold the meat for less than they paid for the whole carcass and that this small percentage of profit was made on the byproducts. So far as is known these assertions have never been disproved.

Yet Mr. Palmer is calling attention to the enormous increase in the assets of the five big packing companies as though that were proof that they were making illegitimate profits. He says that the net worth of the companies has grown from \$92,000,000 in 1904 to \$479,000,000 in 1919, and that, in the same period, \$105,000,000 has been paid in cash dividends. He says further that only \$89,000,000 of their net worth at the present time is represented in increased capitalization.

These figures, however, prove nothing more than that the packers have been conducting a large and growing business. The size of the business is indicated by Mr. Palmer's statement that the sales for 1918 amounted to \$3,200,000,000. A net profit of 5 per cent on this sum would not be unreasonable. This would amount to \$160,000,000. A profit of 1 per cent would be \$32,000,000.

No retail merchant could continue in business on so narrow a margin. Yet the demagogues who for years have been trying to convince the public that it is a crime to do a large amount of business cite the gross profits of the packers as proof that something is wrong. They say that there is profiteering in any business which earns \$50,000,000 or \$100,000,000 in a year, especially if that business is in any way connected with the necessities of life.

We are not defending the packers. They are able to attend to that for themselves. But those thinking persons who wish to understand the situation will do well to refrain from condemning big business merely because it is big and to analyze the figures before deciding that a corporation which has an annual turnover of billions is robbing the public merely because there are millions of profit in its annual turnover.

It will be wise to suspend judgment in this case until the effect of the attorney general's compromise on the high cost of living is manifest. If the packers have been robbing the public, including both the producers and consumers of meat, the unscrubbing of the packing outlet may bring about lower prices. But it will not decrease the number of bushels of grain required to produce 100 pounds of pork nor the amount of hay and grain to fatten beef cattle. And it

is not likely that it will decrease the price of grain or hay on the farm. The high price of meat goes right back to the high cost of producing it, when it is not due to the profiteering of the retail dealer.

If the charge be well founded that the packers were conspiring to monopolize the sale of all food products, there will be considerable satisfaction at the breaking up of this monopoly regardless of the effect on prices. On the surface the packers were competing with the wholesale grocers in the distribution of meat substitutes, but the wholesale grocers and the attorney general apparently feared that this competition was undertaken for the sole purpose of driving the wholesale grocers out of business.

The result of the agreement with the packers leaves the wholesale grocers in control of the field. They were competing with one another before and the public was not suffering. This competition in the trade is likely to continue.

MAYOR-ELECT MOORE'S LETTER

Railroad Problem Only One Angle of the Wide Emergency Powers Granted to the President

Washington, Dec. 20.

WHEN will the United States get out of the war? This is one of the most perplexing questions in Washington as it is to business men generally. James B. Bonner, who has been a bellwether of the iron and steel trade in Washington during the war and who will soon close up his office there and return to Philadelphia, is one of those who have been looking up this important matter with a view of ascertaining when and where we get out. Most of the war legislation since the emergency powers to the President carried the provision that these powers should continue until peace was declared "by proclamation of the President." The comptroller of the treasury some time ago had correspondence with the secretary of war with regard to "the termination of the present emergency," leaving the matter more or less unsettled.

Meanwhile, it seems to be up to the President, who, in one of his messages to Congress with regard to the very important matter of federal control of railroads, indicated that he would turn the railroads back to their owners on or before January 1 next, unless certain things were done by Congress. The President has the power to return the railroads at any time he shall deem such action needed and desirable, although the act of March 21, 1918, provided for federal control for a period not exceeding twenty-one months following the termination of the present emergency.

The latter law has, to a certain extent, been regarded as political, since it has given the President power, of which in some instances he has not failed to avail himself, to consolidate bureaus and hold over in the permanent service agencies that Congress intended should be but temporary. The war finance corporation act, the act creating the capital investment committee, the trading with the enemy act, which gave A. Mitchell Palmer great power as alien property custodian, and the naval commandeering act, were all dependent upon the emergency clause as to the President's peace proclamation. It is a wonderful power the President still exercises under all these war acts and there is much restiveness with regard to their continuance.

COLONEL JOHN P. WOOD, of Philadelphia, and many others interested in the textile industry are not at all friendly to the proposition to keep war power in the hands of the President while foreign nations are closing up their war affairs and proceeding to capture the world's trade. The news from abroad that the British textile manufacturers have more orders for hosiery than they can fill, coupled with information that silk hose may go to \$12 or \$15 retail per pair in the United States, is not cheering to those who are seeking the dyestuffs in the United States so essential to manufacturing here in competition with foreign producers.

The Senate finance committee has been plugging away at the Longworth dyestuffs bill, which was fought in the House on the ground that it proposed to further bottle up American manufactures against the use of German vat dyes which were readily obtainable in France and England. This is an old story now, in which the duPonts and other American manufacturers of dyes figure, but it is extremely important to the hosiery and other textile manufacturers in Philadelphia and elsewhere who have large orders, but who are sometimes at their wits' ends to comply with war board requirements to obtain the necessary raw materials which they must have to keep the wheels running.

Joseph S. Rambo, of Norristown, has been contacted by Colonel Wood and others in Washington about this situation.

ALTHOUGH he has made a great success of it in the advertising world, nothing so appeals to F. W. Ayer as the work of the Young Men's Christian Association. For many years Mr. Ayer has been president of this organization in Camden and he has done much to build it up and make it a solid institution. For more than fifty years Mr. Ayer has maintained his business in Philadelphia and a residence in New Jersey. He may be counted one of the pioneers among those old time Camdenites who found that city a good place to live in while they engaged in business on this side of the river. In some instances, as with Brother Van Seiver, of the big furniture establishment, and Brother Johnson, of the Victor Talking Machine Co., the order is reversed, Camden being the business place and Philadelphia or its suburbs the place of residence.

WHEN James Pollock, the inimitable after-dinner speaker who helped make the Five o'Clock Club famous, was running one end of the Philadelphia bi-centennial celebration, in 1907, Secretary Charles W. Alexander, who has been a specialist in centennial celebrations, arranged for the minting through Jim Kerns, then superintendent of the United States Mint, of 200,000 William Penn medals, which were tossed out to spectators during the great civic parade. Of the whole number Mr. Alexander was by just two of these interesting souvenirs, which have been so well-preserved as to look as if they had just come from the press. What has become of the remainder?

ROBERT LAMBERTON, the sheriff-elect, is a vigorous debater in Councils. He is also an orator and story teller. And the Lambertons, children, "who are the brightest ever," figure in some of these stories. One of the best of the sheriff's yarns is that which deals with the young sport in the back of the crowded hall, who, when square-jawed Bob appeared upon the platform, inquired of a bystander, "what is Philadelphia Jack O'Brien doing up on the stage?" Sheriff Bob is of the robust type, once a football player at the university, something like Harry A. Mackey, who also grew up that way, and still keeps up his exercise, walking long distances and when necessary, taking it out on his "divver."

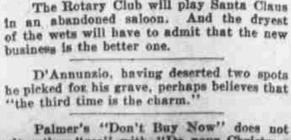
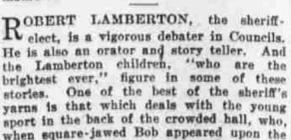
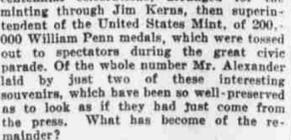
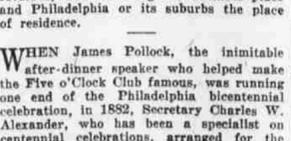
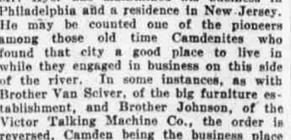
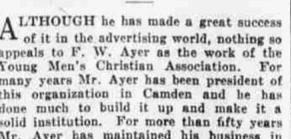
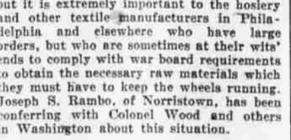
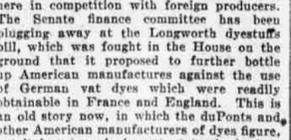
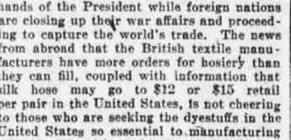
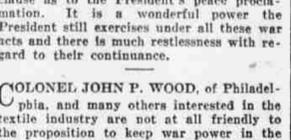
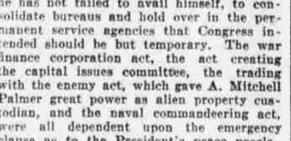
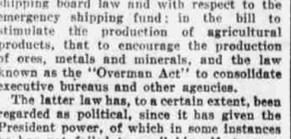
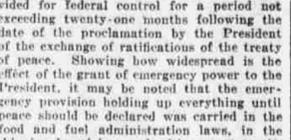
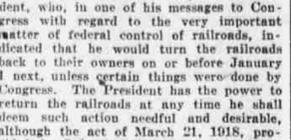
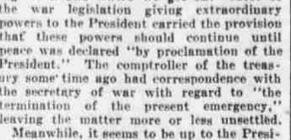
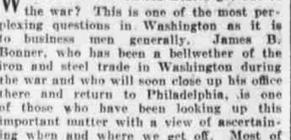
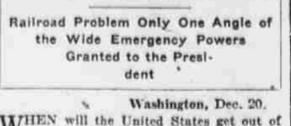
The Rotary Club will play Santa Claus in an abandoned saloon. And the drest of the wets will have to admit that the new business is the better one.

D'Annunzio, having deserted two spots he picked for his grave, perhaps believes that "the third time is the charm."

Palmer's "Don't Buy Now" does not altogether "gee" with "Do your Christmas shopping early."

Turkeys are flying higher than ever this year.

SEASONABLE STUFF



THE CHAFFING DISH

Dear Red, In reply to your appeals, we are heartily glad to buy the Seals

One proof of the degeneracy of the present age is that every little snowstorm is called a blizzard.

M. C. L. Couplets That our butcher bills with some ease we may view. Au lieu de filet, we employ kidney stew.

Where to Eat After Meals A Greek restaurant, Eleventh below Walnut, lures the eating public thus: Ladies & Gentlemen! I beg to state that to my long experience in the business of this kind I absolutely found the greatest difficulty to have the good people to come steady to a mentioned business, because in most places nothing can be had but surface attraction otherwise it will cost you a fortune and by that reason we want you to tell your friends about this place to give you a trial, after you have finished eating your meals.

We have been asked what we consider the best poem ever contributed to the Dish. It is not fair to single out one above all others, as our clients' verses express many different moods; but as a specimen of neat wit, the following is our favorite. It came to us in August, 1918, with no name attached. We have never learned who wrote it, and reprint it here in the hope of finding out.

"Street Closed" BARBARA'S heart, like a busy street, Beams with a throng of little loves; Each holds onward with stubborn feet, Jostles his neighbor, pushes, shoves.

BUT all congestion would swiftly stop— No crowd could travel that thoroughfare, If only I, like a traffic cop, Could be forever on fixed post there!

A Christmas Dialogue AJAX—Hallo, Socrates! Bless me, when I saw a stout gentleman tumble with such emphasis I had no idea it was you. What have you in that package? Nothing breakable, I trust? SOCRATES—Some little glass balls for the Christmas tree. I fear they have gone West.

AJAX—Well, it is quite a while since I saw you last. What do you say to an oyster stew? SOCRATES—A very meritorious idea.

AJAX—It seems to see all this snow. I think it is cheap to bring one closer to the rear.

EXILE WE'VE eucalyptus and bamboo And almost everything Grows in our garden; palm trees, too, Where sweet, wild thrushes sing.

THE California hills are gold. I'd like to see again All laughing in their autumn dress The little hills of Maine.

FROM here we see the ocean throw Great balls of flying foam; I wonder if the sun's hot out Along the roads back home?

BEATRICE WASHBURN, Santa Barbara, Calif.

It is customary to say of the opposing political party that they have learned nothing and forgotten nothing. As we survey our education thus far, we feel that our case is worse still. We have learned nothing and forgotten everything.

SOCRATES—Why do you hold such a grudge against your posterity? AJAX—Yesterday the ashman called and

AFTER DANNY DEEVER

"WAY AFTER" "WHAT makes the janitor so nice?" said the Tenant-on-parade. "A son of a touch; a son of a touch," the Older Tenant said. "What makes the hall-boy so polite and what's his little list?" "A bit of graft, a bit of graft," the Older Tenant hissed.

"What makes the milkman grin that grin?" said Tenant-newly-come. "He wants some coin and you are it," said Tenant-very-glum. "What makes the 'phone girl speak so sweet?" said Tenant-on-parade; "She's got you down for two or three, that surely must be paid!"

For they're making every tenant, you can hear the old bunk ring. The regiment's in hollow square all ready with the sting; And you must be their victim before the Christmas morn, Or spend a year with heinous hate, and grouch, and silent scorn. —Anon (With apologies to R. K.)

The humorist who was wont to put a piece of coal in the toe of a Christmas stocking is not indulging in any such extravagance this year.

The motto of the Reds who will parade in manacles on Christmas Day in New York is, "But we anticipate."

City employes will find old Uncle Bonus a valuable assistant to Santa Claus.

What Do You Know?

QUIZ 1. What common domestic animal was unknown to the Indians in America until the advent of the white man? 2. What is the correct pronunciation of the word prestige? 3. Who are the Doukhobors? 4. What is a duniwassal? 5. Name four notable novels left unfinished by their authors. 6. What is a doublet? 7. What is chrysopease? 8. What part of American territory was the first to be discovered by the white man? 9. What is a coatee? 10. What does the Latin phrase "Deus ex machina" mean and how should the "ch" of "machina" be pronounced?

Answers to Yesterday's Quiz 1. It was popularly believed in Europe that the year 1000 A. D. would mark the end of the world. 2. Lima is the largest city in Peru. 3. Andrew Jackson virtually named Martin Van Buren as his successor in the presidency. 4. Rudyard Kipling's "The Light That Failed" has both a tragic and a happy ending. The latter version was the first one published in America. 5. Daniel O'Connell was a noted Irish statesman and orator. He was a leader of the movement in favor of Catholic emancipation. He became a member of Parliament in 1825. In 1843 he was convicted of conspiracy and sedition, but his sentence was reversed the following year. 6. Oberon was king of the 'faeries in medieval mythology. 7. A hereditament is property that can be inherited. 8. Heterodoxy is the opposite of orthodoxy. 9. Danish, Swedish, Norwegian and Icelandic are Scandinavian languages. 10. Washington, for his second term, and John Adams were inaugurated President in Philadelphia.